



# NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER PHILIP ANGELIDES

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## ***State Treasurer Philip Angelides Urges Companies to Reach Settlement Regarding Holocaust Restitution Issues by Close of Century***

**Sacramento, CA--**State Treasurer Philip Angelides today sent letters to companies with whom his office conducts state business, urging them to wrap up negotiations regarding Holocaust restitution claims by December 31, 1999. Letters were sent to companies affected by current negotiations involving the German and United States governments.

The Treasurer is also urging the California State Teacher's Retirement System (CalSTRS) and the California Public Employee's Retirement System (CalPERS) to take similar action with regard to their investments in companies involved in the negotiations regarding compensation for Holocaust-era forced and slave labor and asset seizure.

The State's Pooled Money Investment Account (PMIA), headed by the Treasurer, currently has nearly \$5 billion invested in companies which are subject to various Holocaust restitution lawsuits, and nearly \$4 billion with those companies potentially affected by the current negotiations.

"More than 60 years have passed since these atrocities took place," noted Angelides, "While genuine financial restitution is not possible, a morally acceptable settlement must be reached quickly, particularly given the advanced age of survivors."

California is home to the second-largest population of Holocaust survivors in the United States, estimated at nearly 20,000.

Angelides' letters to companies who conduct business with the PMIA are being sent on the eve of critical negotiations scheduled for November 16 and 17 in Bonn, Germany between the German and the United States governments, the companies, and organizations such as the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany ("the Claims Conference"), and the World Jewish Congress. In the letters, Angelides, who heads the PMIA, urges the parties to "work diligently and responsively to resolve these negotiations" before the turn of the century.

The settlement, if reached, would provide compensation for up to 2.4 million surviving Holocaust-era slave laborers and forced laborers, as well as for those whose assets were seized, throughout the world, and would protect the companies from further individual and class action litigation. The absence of a global settlement exposes these companies to protracted litigation, which could be damaging to the State's long-term investments and interests, said Angelides.

In his capacity as chair of CalSTRS' corporate governance sub-committee, the Treasurer has placed an item on the November 3 board agenda, urging CalSTRS to take action with regard to its approximate \$1.4 billion invested in German and United States companies potentially affected by various Holocaust restitution lawsuits. And, as a member of the board of CalPERS, the Treasurer has requested that a similar item be placed on the November 15 CalPERS investment committee meeting agenda for consideration.

Angelides serves as one of nine members of the Executive Monitoring Committee, a network of state and local government finance officers, which meets periodically to monitor and help speed the progress of Holocaust restitution issues. The Committee was instrumental in playing a central role in the recent landmark \$1.25 billion Swiss banks settlement and has been closely monitoring the U.S.-German negotiations.

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